

## A PEAR FOR ALL SEASONS

### pear-a-rama

Americans draw from a rich heritage of timeless fresh fruit favorites—from the humble cobbler to the most elegant cheese and fruit tray. And, few fruits lend themselves so beautifully to such a wide variety of enticing dishes and appealing snacks as luscious fresh Western pears. Bite into a fresh pear and savor its exquisite flavor and marvelous juiciness.

Today, thanks to modern storage methods, a bounty of glorious Western pears can be enjoyed throughout the seasons of the year. Although all part of the same family, each variety of pear has its own unique characteristics. The Pacific Mountain Bartlett pear appears first, arriving in local markets in late August and usually lasting into November. This greenish-yellow smooth-fleshed, very juicy pear is prized for fresh eating, desserts and salads, as well as for canning.

The spectacular, crimson-skinned Red Bartlett, also available in the fall, has the same size, shape and eating qualities as the regular Bartlett.

The seasons for the many Western winter pear varieties overlap that of the Bartlett. These pears appear in the fall and remain throughout the winter and spring months. Three of the best known winter pear varieties are the Anjou, Bosc and Comice.

The Anjou, noted for its juicy, spicy-sweet flesh, is a favorite for fresh eating and for salads. The aristocratic Bosc, with its gracefully tapering neck and rich, russeted coloring, is excellent for baking, poaching and preserving, as well as for fresh eating.

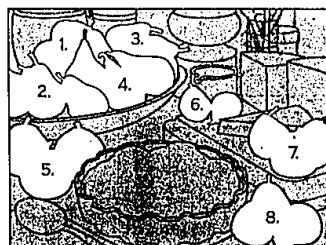
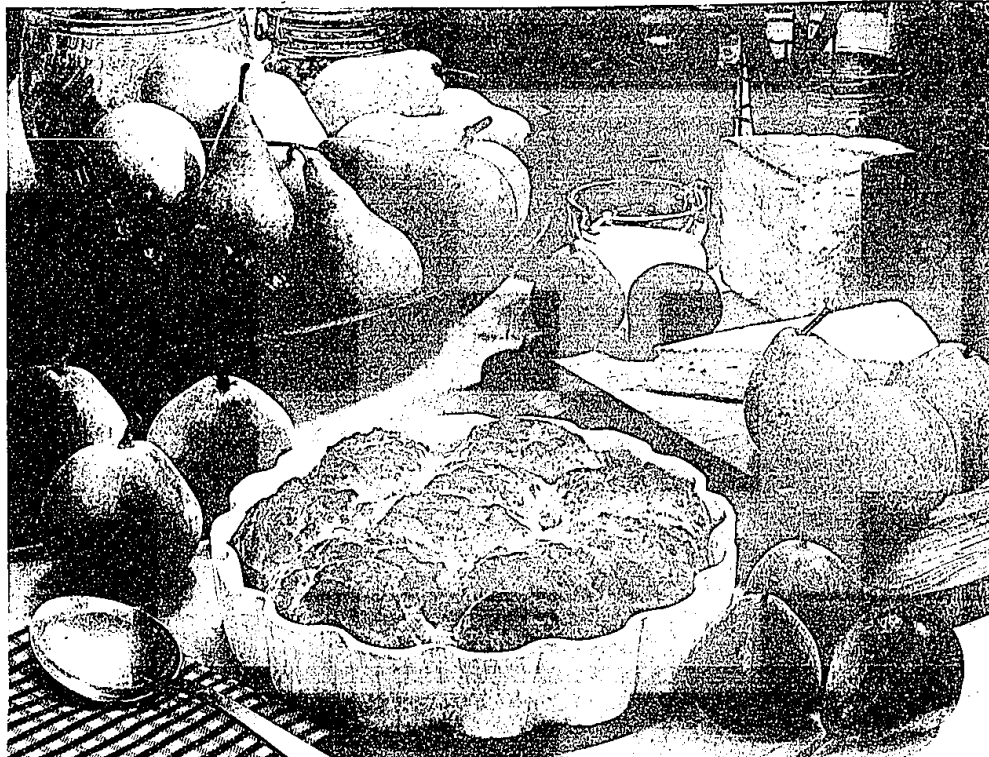
The chubby Comice, at its best during the holiday season, has a smooth, very juicy flesh and is often recognized by its crimson blush. Its fresh eating quality is superb.

The list of Western winter pears also includes the less familiar Nelis, Forelle and Seckel varieties. The Nelis, a medium-to-small pear with a sweet, creamy flesh, cans and cooks well and is ideal for out-of-hand snacking. The bell-like Forelle is juicy and sweet when ripe and holds its shape well in canning. And finally, there is the tiny Seckel. This sweet pear is as excellent eaten fresh as it is canned or pickled.

As far as recipes go, old-fashioned Fresh Pear Cobbler (shown) is hard to beat. Sliced fresh pears, spiced with ginger, bake beneath a rich biscuit topping in this fine, traditional American dessert.

Simple, yet elegant, the fruit and cheese tray is a dessert classic. This easy duo takes on fresh appeal when a sampling of Western pears is offered with a variety of cheeses.

Macaroon-Stuffed Pears, with their unusual filling, are delightfully easy. Equally delicious, Spicy Fresh Pear Squares, wholesome bar cookies flavored with Western pears, make a wonderful addition to dessert tables or lunch boxes.



WESTERN PEAR VARIETIES  
PEAR-A-RAMA

- |                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Anjou                     | 5. Comice  |
| 2. Red Bartlett              | 6. Seckel  |
| 3. Pacific Mountain Bartlett | 7. Nelis   |
| 4. Bosc                      | 8. Forelle |

#### FRESH PEAR RIPENING CLUES

The skin of the Pacific Mountain Bartlett pear turns from green to yellow—or, in the case of the Red Bartlett, bright crimson—as it ripens. Western winter pears, however, do not change color as they ripen. Ripeness should, instead, be judged by a simple test. If the flesh yields slightly to gentle thumb pressure at the stem end, the pear is sweet, tender and ready to enjoy.

If Western pears are still firm when purchased, place them in a bowl at room temperature until they pass this test. As pears ripen, put them in the refrigerator until you wish to use them.

#### FRESH PEAR COBBLER

- 1/4 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger or cinnamon
- Dash salt
- 1/2 cup water
- 4 cups sliced Western winter pears\*
- 2 teaspoons lime or lemon juice
- Biscuit Topping
- Light cream (optional)

In large saucepan combine sugar, flour, ginger and salt; stir in water. Cook and stir over medium heat until bubbly. Add pears and lime juice; heat thoroughly. Pour into 1-1/2-quart baking dish. Spoon Biscuit Topping over pears. Bake at 400° F. 20 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown. Serve with light cream. Makes 6 servings.

**Biscuit Topping:** Combine 1-1/2 cups flour, 3 tablespoons sugar, 2 teaspoons baking powder and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Cut in 1/3 cup butter or margarine. Combine 1 beaten egg and 1/2 cup milk. Add to flour mixture; stir only until moistened. Makes 6 to 9 biscuits.

\*Pacific Mountain Bartlett pears can be substituted.

#### SPICY FRESH PEAR SQUARES

(not pictured)

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon each ground nutmeg, baking soda and salt
- 1-1/2 cups chopped fresh Pacific Mountain Bartlett pears
- 3/4 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup cash raisins and coarsely chopped walnut
- Powdered sugar (optional)

Cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs, one at a time, mix thoroughly after each addition. Combine flour, baking powder, spices, soda and salt. Add to creamed mixture. Stir in pears, rolled oats, raisins and nuts. Spread into greased 13 x 9 x 1-inch baking dish. Bake at 375° F. 20 to 25 minutes or until wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean. While still warm, sprinkle lightly with powdered sugar and cut into squares. Makes about 4 dozen (1-1/2-inch) squares.

#### MACAROON-STUFFED PEARS

(not pictured)

- 6 macaroons, crumbled
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 2 tablespoons sliced almonds
- 1 tablespoon packed brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 2 Western winter pears, halved and cored
- Whipped cream or ice cream

Combine macaroons, yolk, butter, almonds, sugar and lemon peel. Place pear halves, cut-side up in baking dish. Fill centers of pears with macaroon mixture. Bake at 350° F. 20 minutes or until pears are tender and topping is crisp and browned. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream. Makes 4 servings.

#### CHEESE SELECTION GUIDE FOR FRESH PEARS

Fresh Western pears of any variety pair beautifully with many cheeses—for appetizers as well as desserts. The following are some good ones to try with pears.

**Brie**  
A blue-veined cheese, semi-soft, sometimes crumbly, with a pleasant mild flavor.

**Cheddar**  
Soft, cheddar-type cheese with mild yellow crust and fleshy, straw-colored interior. Mild to pungent in flavor.

**Colby**  
Soft cheese with a mellow, mild flavor. First yellow to orange in color. Mild to strong in flavor.

**Comté**  
A semi-soft, hard cheese, but not too hard. It has a mellow, mild flavor. Can be eaten with a variety of foods.

**Emmentaler**  
A semi-soft, hard cheese, but not too hard. It has a mellow, mild flavor. Can be eaten with a variety of foods.

**Fontina**  
A semi-soft, hard cheese, but not too hard. It has a mellow, mild flavor. Can be eaten with a variety of foods.

#### PEAR SELECTION GUIDE

